

PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK/SITE NAME: Heinrich and Hannah Guese House
OWNER: Mark A. Parthie and Steven E. Kirkland
APPLICANT: Same as owners
LOCATION: 1819 Lubbock Street, Houston, Texas – Old Sixth Ward Historic District
30-DAY HEARING NOTICE: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: IIb
PC Agenda Date: 9-28-06
HPO FILE NO.: 06PL23
DATE ACCEPTED: Sept-07-06
HAHC HEARING DATE: 9-21-06

SITE INFORMATION

Lot 16 (Northern half)) is a 58' x 50' lot, also shown currently on HCAD records as 1817 Lubbock Street (being Lots 15 and 16, Block 441, W. R Baker Subdivision, NSBB), City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a historic one and one half-story, wood frame residence on the northern portion. Another one-story, historic wood frame residence is located on the southern portion of Lot 16, and another one-story, wood frame historic house is located on Lot 15.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Landmark and Protected Landmark Designation

History and Significance Summary:

The Heinrich and Hannah Guese house is one of approximately ten extant Gulf Coast Cottages known in Houston. Of these ten structures, the Guese Home is one of only three known to have been built prior to the Civil War and may be the oldest. Furthermore, the house is one of less than ten residential structures of all styles built prior to the Civil War remaining in Houston, including those structures moved to Sam Houston Park. The house was associated with a German family that arrived in Texas during the period of heavy German immigration to Texas in the 1840's and 1850's and settled in Houston. This groups' contribution to the cultural and historical legacy of Houston has been eclipsed by the history of the German communities of Central Texas. To date the building is the oldest house in Houston to be the subject of a Protected Landmark designation application.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:

The lot at 1819 Lubbock Street is located within the boundary of the Old Sixth Ward Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places on January 23, 1978. The Old Sixth Ward Historic District was designated as a city historic district by City Council on June 25, 1998.

The circa 1857 Heinrich and Hannah Guese house was originally located in the First Ward at 1720 Spring Street, being Lots 2 and 3A, Block 301, W. R. Baker Subdivision, NSBB.. According to research completed by Thomas McWhorter, the one-and-one-half story, wood framed home was relocated to 1819 Lubbock Street to prevent demolition. The house is a survivor from Houston's antebellum past. A certificate of appropriateness for the relocation of the historic home into the Old Sixth Ward Historic District and restoration plans were granted to the property owner on August 24, 2006 by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC).

On May 2nd 1857 Heinrich Guese purchased two acres of land, including "improvements" from Frederick and Henrietta Puls for \$50. The land was sold from the Southern portion of Frederick Puls' 10 acres homestead on the south bank of White Oak Bayou in the Beauchamp Springs tract. Puls had previously purchased the

land from Henry H. Allen in 1853. The Beauchamp Springs tract was named for a natural spring, which drained to White Oak Bayou. The spring's modern location is probably immediately south of the current location of Matheson Tri-Gas at 2200 Houston Avenue. Beauchamp Springs was one of Houston's earliest recreational areas. It was opened to the public in the summer of 1838, some 60 years prior to the creation of the first City of Houston park. The springs also served the practical purpose of providing fresh drinking water to Houstonians. The area north of Spring Street extending to the banks of White Oak bayou was formally platted as the Beauchamp Springs Tract on April 10, 1893.

In 1863 the Guese family purchased an additional one half acre from the W.R. Baker tract adjacent to the southern boundary line of the Guese homestead, for \$150 Confederate dollars. According to The Sixth Ward/Sabine Revitalization Study, published by The Greater Houston Preservation Alliance, William R. Baker was one of four Houstonians who purchased large tracts in this area from the S. P. Hollingsworth survey of the John Austin two leagues grant of 1824. Spring Street was the boundary line between the Beauchamp Springs Tract originally purchased by Henry H. Allen and the W.R. Baker tract, which begins at Spring Street and extends southward to Buffalo Bayou. Baker, a native New Yorker who came to Texas in 1837, was instrumental in bringing the major railroads to Houston. Baker served as Mayor of Houston from 1880-1885. The Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad, The Houston and Texas Central Railroad (of which Baker was President), Texas and New Orleans Railroad, and Galveston Houston & San Antonio Railroad would eventually traverse W.R. Baker's subdivision. Today, much of First Ward and all of Sixth Ward are located within the W.R. Baker Tract. Both areas were home to many people who worked for the railroads or in occupations that indirectly serviced the railroad industry, most of whom were Germans.

The Guese home's new location at 1819 Lubbock Street remains within the boundaries of the W.R. Baker Addition less than one mile south from its historic location. The house had been moved at least twice before, within the confines of its historic two and one half acre home site. The 1869 W.E. Wood map of Houston shows the home very near its location at 1720 Spring Street. Sometime after 1869 and prior to its 1907 appearance on a Sanborn Company fire insurance map, the home was moved to the far West side of the 1700 Block of Spring, partially obstructing Bradley Street which was later re-named Sabine. The 1907 map indicates the presence of other houses constructed to the east side of the 1700 Block of Spring Street, also known as Block 301 W.R. Baker Addition. The Guese home is shown once again on a 1925 Sanborn map indicating the relocation of the home back to its earlier site near the middle of the north side of the 1700 Block of Spring Street. Other homes were constructed during the first quarter of the 20th century to the West of the home and fronting on Sabine Street. In August 2006, the Heinrich and Hannah Guese home was moved from its site at 1720 Spring Street to 1819 Lubbock Street to prevent its demolition. The other 20th century structures, which shared the undivided 17,000 square foot lot on Spring Street with the Guese home, were demolished to make way for new construction.

First Ward is one of four original wards created when Houston was founded. The four wards were precursors to modern day City Council districts. Each of the four wards was represented by two Alderman, similar to modern day City Council Members. First Ward began at the northwest corner of Main Street and Congress and extended northwesterly to White Oak Bayou and the Western city limits. As Houston grew, the wards system was eventually expanded to include 6 wards. This system of government was abolished in 1906. At the time of Heinrich Guese's purchase of the house and land, this portion of First Ward was sparsely populated and considered suburban. An 1869 W.E. Wood's map of Houston indicates the presence of fewer than 25 houses in the immediate 20 blocks area, of which the Guese home is noted. Other nearby homes belonged to the Puls, Wichman, Koertjes, Tiekoetter, and Barteles families.

Heinrich Guese was born August 15, 1832 in the small town of Heepen near Bielefeld in the Westfalen - Nordrhein region of Germany. Guese likely immigrated to Texas in the early 1850's when other nearby First Ward landowners, also from the town of Heepen, came to Texas. First Ward was home to many early German-Texan families, who once represented a large percentage of the cultural makeup of Houston.

On March 8, 1857 Heinrich Guese married Hannah Tiekoetter in Houston. Hannah Tiekoetter, also born near the town of Heepen, Germany in 1828, was the daughter of a nearby First Ward landowner. Both were members of Houston's First Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Gueses had three children after purchasing the land in First Ward. The first child, Henrie, was born in 1858. A daughter, born soon after, is not mentioned in the 1860 Harris County census and is presumed to have died in infancy. Their third child Friedericke was born in 1868. The children continued to live in the home until the 1920's when they moved to nearby neighborhoods.

Heinrich Guese was enlisted in the 4th Field Battery, Texas Light Artillery as a Private during the Civil War in 1862 and was paroled in 1865. A parole was the official classification given to Confederate soldiers at the end of the Civil war to indicate that a soldier had pledged his oath of allegiance to the United States Government. A deed transaction signed by Hannah Guese in 1863 for the purchase of 6 lots adjacent to their homestead and fronting on Spring Street suggests that Heinrich Guese was absent during that time. Heinrich Guese's wife Hannah was included in the Harris County indigent wives of soldiers list from 1862 to 1864, which entitled her to \$12 per month in aid.

Heinrich Guese was listed as a gardener in city directories from the early 1870's. He operated stalls, number 6 and 8 in the city market, located in Market Square. Nearby neighbor Frederick Puls was also listed as a gardener at that time.

Heinrich Guese died from "fever" at his home on December 10, 1885. According to Houston's First Evangelical Lutheran Church records he was buried by the German Association and German Lodge. An 1899 Houston Daily Post article mentions an H. Guese among the Confederate veterans buried at The Deutsche Gesellschaft Cemetery on Washington Avenue, which was later renamed Washington Cemetery and annexed by neighboring Glenwood Cemetery. Hannah Guese died February 15, 1910 and is also buried at the Washington cemetery next to Heinrich.

The Guese home is constructed and classified as a Gulf Coast Cottage. This was a regional vernacular type of construction heavily influenced by the Greek Revival style popular at the time. Its outside perimeter measures 36 feet in width and 26 feet in depth. The house type is characterized by a gable ended roof and front porch, which measures 6 feet in depth by 36 feet in length, inset beneath the roofline of the front facade. The home's large entablature is supported by four rectangular "box" columns with decorative capitals. Its five bay façade, with later alterations, is typical of center hall planned Greek revival homes of the period. A pre 1907 alteration enclosed a portion of the front porch as noted in a 1907 Sanborn Fire Insurance map. A typical sidelight and transom light Greek Revival entry frames the ornate four paneled front door. The home has two window openings in either gable end, but the attic space is unfinished. Remaining early window sash in the gable ends are of the six over six-paned variety; which is another hallmark of the Greek Revival style prevalent at the time of construction. The muntin profiles in these windows match those of the transom and sidelight windows that surround the home's main entry. The floor plan consists of a center hall with two rooms to either side. A rear doorway at the terminus of the center hall is capped with a multi light transom. This former rear doorway has been covered with siding. A newer alternate egress exists in a rear room most

recently used as a kitchen space. The ceiling framing in the rear room currently used as a kitchen, exhibits evidence of a now removed interior stair.

The home does not include a kitchen “ell” which was a common solution to “modernizing” and to increasing living space in homes of this style and vintage. Neither the 1869 W.E. Wood’s Map nor 1907 Sanborn Fire Insurance map depict a kitchen ell. However, the 1907 Sanborn fire Insurance Co. map indicates the presence of several outbuildings located to the rear of the historic structure. It was common practice to locate residential kitchens in freestanding structures away from the main residence. This was done to thwart the spread of kitchen fires to the main house. The fires from cooking in the separated kitchen during those hot summer months also did not heat up the house before families sat down in their dining room in the house to enjoy their meals.

Part of the Fourth Ward until 1876, the Old Sixth Ward Historic District has the largest concentration of Victorian-era buildings in Houston. The majority of the houses standing today were built in the 1870’s, 80’s, and 90’s as modest, one-story frame cottages occupied by a single family. The distinctive Victorian character of these dwellings was enhanced by decorative millwork usually applied to the front porches. As the 20th Century progressed, new housing reflected changes in architectural style. Bungalows were built among the Victorian cottages, but the essential character of the neighborhood did not change. During World War II, many of the houses were converted from single to multi-family dwellings, often owned by absentee landlords. Since achieving recognition as both a nationally and locally designated historic district, the Old Sixth Ward has witnessed the restoration of many homes to single-family occupancy.

RESTORATION HISTORY AND CONDITION:

The owner was granted a certificate of appropriateness to relocate the historic house from 1720 Spring Street to 1819 Lubbock Street on August 24, 2006. The HAHC had previously approved COA’s to relocate the same house to 2002 Lubbock Street, 705 White Street and/or 817 Sabine Street, which were alternative sites should the house not be relocated to the currently proposed site to prevent demolition. The house had be relocated from the First Ward as the lots where the house was currently located had been sold, and if the house had not been relocated, the new owner of the lots would have demolished it. The applicant was granted a certificate of appropriateness for the following work: Relocate a wood frame, residential cottage, currently located in the First Ward at 1720 Spring Street, to the site at 1819 Lubbock Street. The house will be relocated to the northern portion of Lot 16, the site being 58’-0” deep and 50’-0” wide; it will be placed 3”-0” from the side (East) property line and 10’-8” from the side (West) property line facing Silver Street; it will be placed 13’-10” from the front property line facing Lubbock Street; the proposed setback is compatible with the historic buildings in the existing block and blockface on Lubbock and Silver Streets.

House will be placed on a high raised, pier and beam foundation in order to accommodate required parking and additional storage under the building. Piers will be constructed of poured concrete and visible piers facing Lubbock Street, which will support the original front porch of house, with be faced with reddish (monochromatic) color brick veneer or wrapped in wire mesh and clad with painted stucco; height of piers from the ground will be 96” with piers measuring 12” X 12” X 96”; piers will be drilled into the ground to a depth to be determined by a licensed engineer. Piers will be placed every 6’-0” on center or as determined by an engineer to meet building codes and to allow for parking under the building at the rear. The piers will be screened behind board and batten cladding which will clad the foundation enclosure beneath the historic dwelling; walls of foundation enclosure will be constructed with either treated lumber or hardiboard and painted to differentiate it

from the historic house and to blend with the surrounding landscaping. The front wall of the foundation enclosure will follow the same footprint of the historic house leaving the area under the front porch open.

Parking for two cars will be available with driveway access shared, using the existing driveway accessed from Silver Street for both houses on Lot 16. If garage doors are to be installed, they will be designed to mimic the board and batten cladding of the foundation enclosure. Any driveway surfacing will be of a permeable material such as decomposed granite or pea gravel.

The roof of the house will be rebuilt to match the pitch and design of the structure as it appeared at its original site. Roofing material will consist of composition shingles. The front porch will be reconstructed with treated tongue and groove flooring and wood columns, bases, capitals, and entablature will match the original house. Salvageable column parts will be saved during preparation for the move. A balustrade railing will be added to the perimeter of the porch of a height not to exceed 23 inches above the porch floor; porch balustrade will consist of 1" X 1" square wood balusters spaced three inches apart, and will be capped with a beveled wood cap rail. Entry stairs from the porch to a front sidewalk will be 6 feet wide, same width as the center bay of front porch, and will be constructed of wood. Stair rails will match the porch rails with bottom newel posts matching the porch columns in design.

Original wood windows with 6/6 lights will be restored. The attic space allows room for necessary, additional living space which will be improved as two bedrooms and a bathroom, with no alterations to the exterior roof form of the house. The side gable ends of the house were originally built with two windows on each end. These windows will be repaired/replaced as needed to match original.

Renovation will include an addition to be added at the rear of the dwelling; the addition will be stepped in 6" from the rear southeast corner of the original house to leave that delineation between which the addition, including an open deck, will be built on the south elevation; the addition and deck will run the width of the original house; The addition will extend south 10'-0" X 25'-0" wide, which will include a half bath, kitchen, and a sun room/dining area. The west 10'-0" X 10'-0" will consist of an open outdoor porch deck. The addition will be designed with a shed roof sloping south and will be attached to the lower portion and at the rear of the original roof as necessary to provide enough slope for drainage and access to the original attic for HVAC, plumbing and electrical equipment chase adjacent to the downstairs 1/2 bath. The roof will feature a closed, wood eave overhang, fascia and soffit similar to house; the exterior of the addition will be clad in siding matching the original siding. Windows and window trim in addition will match the original windows of the house and will be installed on the east wall of the addition. The west wall of the addition, accessing the open deck, will feature a single, wood door with divided sidelights and transom or single wood, French door centered. The rear of the addition will feature a group of four single, fixed French doors with transom window above. The open deck will feature a wood balustrade railing similar in design to front porch. The exact location and configuration of the open deck stairway will require consultation with the engineer to work around piers and parking access but will be similar in materials and design to the stairs on the front porch.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Houston records
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Houston Daily Post obituaries Saturday December 12, 1885

Houston The Unknown City 1836-1946 -----Marguerite Johnston 1991

Houston's Forgotten Heritage -----Dorothy Knox Howe Houghton

Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. maps 1896-1925

Sixth Ward/Sabine Revitalization Study. Greater Houston Preservation Alliance 1986

Washington Cemetery Historic Trust records

W. E. Wood map of Houston, Texas 1869

The information and sources for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Thomas McWhorter, Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.

APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION...:

Sec. 33-224. Criteria for designation of a Protected Landmark.

- (a) The HAHC and the commission, in making recommendations with respect to designation, and the city council, in making a designation, shall consider three or more of the following criteria, as appropriate for the Protected Landmark designation. If the HAHC reviews an application for designation of a Protected Landmark initiated after the designation of the Landmark, the HAHC shall review the basis for its initial recommendation for designation and may recommend designation of the landmark as a protected landmark unless the property owner elects to designate and if the landmark has met at least (3) three of the criteria of Section 33-224 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (HPO) at the time of its designation or, based upon additional information considered by the HAHC, the landmark then meets at least (3) three of criteria of Section 33-224 of the HPO, as follows:

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CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

- ☐ ☒ (6) Whether the building, structure, object or site or the buildings, structures, objects or sites within the area are identified as the work of a person or group whose work has influenced the heritage of the city, state, or nation;
- ☐ ☒ (7) Whether specific evidence exists that unique archaeological resources are present;
- ☐ ☒ (8) Whether the building, structure, object or site has value as a significant element of community sentiment or public pride.

OR

- ☒ ☐ The property was constructed before 1905;

OR

- ☐ ☒ The property was listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or designated as a "contributing structure" in an historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places;

OR

- ☐ ☒ The property was designated as a State of Texas Recorded Texas Historical Landmark.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Recommends that the Houston Planning Commission accept the recommendation of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and recommend to City Council the Landmark designation of the Heinrich and Hannah Guese House at 1819 Lubbock St.

SITE LOCATION MAP
Heinrich and Hannah Guese Home
1819 Lubbock St.
Houston, Texas 77007

